

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSC-04 PA-02

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 DRC-01 OMB-01 /065 W

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O 200905Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4855

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 06544

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: NVA/VC ATTACKS AT PHU GIAO AND BEN CAT

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM BIEN HOA MAY 18 REPEATED TO YOU. QT
E

C O N F I D E N T I A L BIEN HOA 266

E.OSOM 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: NVA/VC ATTACKS AT PHU GIAO AND BEN CAT

REF: BIENAYOA 264

1. NVA/VC HAVE REOCCUPIED AND CONTINUE TO HOLD LN BIEN QAMLET
ONE KM SOUTHWEST OF BEN CAT DISTRICT TOWN BUT OTHERWISE
SITUATION SEEMS FAIRLY STABLE FOR THE MOMENT IN B
ZH BEN CAT
AND PHU GIAO.

2. IN CONVERSATION AT 0930 HOURS MAY 18, DEP CMDR MR 3 MG
HIEU DISPLAYED NO DOUBT THAT GVN WOULD RECOVER AN DIEN IN
TWO-PRONGED ACTION OF 43RD MOVING NORTHWEST ON ROUTE 14 (REFTEL)
AND OTHER GVN FORCES MOVING WEST FROM BEN CAT WHICH HE SAID
WOULD GET UNDERWAY TODAY OR TOMORROW UNDE
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COMMAND OF ARVN 18TH

DIV CMDR, BG DAO. THERE WERE GOOD INDICATIONS THAT T-54 TANKS
TJD OPERATED IN BEN CAT DISTRICT ALTHOUGH GEN HIEU SAID HE HAD
NOT HIMSELF SEEN POSITIVE EVIDENCE. HIEU THOUGHT NVA/VC
RVBCCUPATION OF AN DIEN WAS PERHAPS PRELIMINARY TO AN EFFORT
TO THRUST MORE DEEPLY SOUTHWARD IN THE IRON TRIANGLE (SOUTHERN
HALF OF BEN CAT DISTRICT) TOWARD PHU CUONG CAPITOL OF BINH
DUONG PROVINCE. BEN CAT DISTRICT TOWN IS TAKING FAIRLY HEAVY
ABF'S BUT HIEU AND OTHER SENIOR XR3 OFFICERS BELIEVE IT UNLIKELY
COMMUNISTS WOULD ATTEMPT TO TAKE IT AND ARE CONFIDENT ANY SUCH
EFFORT WOULD FAIL.

3. IN PHU GIAO, IMMEDIATE THREAT TO SONG BE BRIDGE APPEARS TO
HAVE BEEN LIFTED AND HIEU REPORTED GVN FORCES CONTINUE TO NUDGE
THE NVA/VC BACK WHEREVER THEY HAVE ATTACKED. THE COMMUNISTS
CONTINUE TO HOLD TWO ROADBLOCKS INTERDICTING ROUTE 1-A SOUTH
OF SONG BE BRIDGE (ONE ROADBLOCK JUST NORTH AND ONE JUST SOUTH
OF BO LA VILLAGE). THERE HAS STILL BEEN NO CONTACT WITH NVA
165TH (EXCEPT SAPPERS) AND 141ST REGIMENTS OF 7TH NVA DIV THOUGHT
TO BE IN THE PHU GIAO AREA, ACCORDING TO HIEU.

4. MR3 REPORTS THAT 7TH RANGER GROUP IS BEING MOVED TO PHU
CUONG TO REINFORCE AND SHORE UP DEFENSES IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA
OF THE PROVINCIAL CAPITOL (THE BRIDGE ACROSS THE FKIGON RIVER AT
PHU CUONG IS AMONG TARGETS THAT MIGHT ATTRACT THE NVA/VC IN THIS
PERIOD). THE 7TH MAY LATER RELIEVE THE 52ND REGIMENT OF THE 18TH
ARVN DIV IN TAN UYEN DISTRICT (NORTHERN BIEN HOA PROVINCE)
PERMITTING THE 52ND TMNJOIN THE 43RD, ALSO OF THE 18TH DIV,
IN OPERATIONS IN BEN CAT WEST OF ROUTE 13.

5. RELIABLE WORD JUST RECEIVED AS THIS MESSAGE IS BEING SENT
IS THAT VNAF HAS DESTROYED TWO T-54 TANKS, ONE AT OUTPOST 82
AND ONE AT AN DIEN HAMLET WEST OF BEN CAT DISTRICT TOWN, WITH
POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION FROM PHOTOGRAPHS.

6. COMMENT. THREE REGIMENTS OF THE NVA 7TH AND 9TH DIVS HAVE
NOT YET SHOWN THEMSELVES IN THE LATEST ACTIONS IN BINH DUONG
PROVINCE. THE MAY 19TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF HO CHI MINH COULD
PROVIDE THE OCCASION F
P THESE FORCES TO ATTEMPT TO STAGE SOME
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SPECTACULAR ACTION. ATTEMPTS COULD INCLUDE DESTRUCTION OF MAJOR
BRIDGES, INTERDICTIONS OF ROUTES 13, 1-A AND 16 WELL SOUTH AND
POSSIBLY ABF'S ON THE PROVINCIAL CAPTOL. PETERS. UNQTE
MARTIN

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NNN

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To: STATE
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